



Flathead National Forest

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Media Release

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Three More Collaboration Field Trips to Start Forest Plan Revision

Public Invited to Experience the Forest and Share Their Values

KALISPELL, MONT – The second of four field trips to kick off the collaborative effort for forest plan revision will be held August 29, 2013. The trip will focus on recreation opportunities, access, existing wilderness and scenic character and will take people around the Hungry Horse Reservoir on the Hungry Horse and Spotted Bear Ranger Districts. The public field trips each focus on subject matter important to the forest plan. On these field trips we ask people to share their values and the benefits they derive from the Flathead National Forest as well as provide input to help us accurately assess the current conditions we have on the forest as they pertain to the topic of the field trip. The trips will also be an opportunity to experience the distinct geographical areas that make up our ranger districts.

The Flathead National Forest is embarking on a multi-year process to update its forest plan, the document that guides how we manage your public lands. The forest plan provides direction for managing resources and activities such as recreation, fish and wildlife habitat, historic and sacred sites, vegetation and timber production. Forest plan revision is achieved in a three-phase process: assessment, revision, and monitoring. The 2012 National Forest System land management planning rule calls for an enhanced commitment to collaboration and public engagement across all three phases, including outreach to groups such as youth.

Due to the distance we will need to travel on the August 29th field trip we will start at 7:45 AM at the Flathead County Fairgrounds, with second a pick-up at the Hungry Horse Ranger District at 8:30 AM. We plan to return people to Hungry Horse by 5:15 PM and the fairgrounds by 6:00 PM. The last two trips are planned to run from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Those trips will begin and end at the Flathead County Fairgrounds with transportation provided for all the field trips.

- August 29 - Recreation settings, opportunities and access, existing wilderness and scenic character (Hungry Horse/Spotted Bear Ranger Districts)
- September 12 - Terrestrial and aquatic habitats, threatened and endangered species, species of conservation concern, and invasive species (Swan Lake Ranger District)
- September 26 – Inventoried roadless areas, recommended wilderness, and wild and scenic rivers (Glacier View Ranger District)

* Social science, economics, and the role and contributions of the Flathead National Forest will be a component of each of the field trips.

The information shared and the feedback received will be used to develop and finalize the assessment, determine needs for change, and to draft a proposed plan. There will be additional opportunities to engage in the collaborative process as the plan is developed over the next few years.

Please RSVP to Wade Muehlhof (ewmuehlhof@fs.fed.us or 406-758-5252) at least one week before the field trip(s) you plan to attend. Please let us know if you have any special accommodation needs. For additional details please visit the Flathead National Forest Plan Revision page on our website:

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/flathead/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5422786&width=full>.

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